

PSEUDO-MYSTICISM AND MODERN SCIENCE.

[John Middleton Murry is one of England's foremost men of letters. As Editor he made for *The Athenæum*, 1919-1921, and has now made for *The New Adelphi*, a high reputation in those circles of eclectic readers who are connoisseurs of the finest and best of modern criticism. For four years he was reviewer to the *Times Literary Supplement*, also serving in the Political Intelligence Department of the War Office during part of the time, 1916-1919. Afterwards he was Chief Censor. He is the author of several works including *Fyodor Dostoevsky*, *Keats and Shakespeare*, *Life of Jesus* and *Things to Come*, the last published in 1928. Only a few weeks ago his *God: Being an Introduction to the Science of Metabiology* made its appearance.

The crude anthropomorphism of religions has acted as a deterrent to the living of the inner life of the Soul for many centuries; now a new danger threatens the Theosophical Movement which has been the champion of soul life in every age and clime, viz., the superior attitude assumed by modern science, in face of the collapse of its materialistic structure, due to its own advance in connection with the mystic ideas of Soul, Spirit, Deity. While we are glad to see acknowledged scientific authorities moving in the direction of the occult world, we say with our respected author that "True mysticism does not need to have room made for it by science or any other mode of human knowledge." If we were to substitute the word "Theosophy" for Mr. Murry's "Mysticism" this fine pronouncement would represent, even in letter as it does in spirit, our own views. Next month we will publish another excellent article by Mr. Murry on the subject of "Western Mysticism."—Eds.]

Before we can substantiate a charge of false mysticism, we need to have some clear conception of true mysticism.

Essentially, mysticism is the conviction of an all-pervading and all-embracing One. The Universe is a universe. It is obvious that to all modes of intellectual cognition this conviction can only be a hypothesis. The act of knowing involves a separation, and an opposition, of the knower and the known; therefore of an all-pervading and all-embracing Unity there can be no intellectual knowledge. Intellectual knowledge excludes unity; unity excludes intellectual knowledge.

Mysticism not merely admits, but insists upon this. Unity is not known, but given in immediate experience; and this immediate experience of unity is *known* to have been such only when the experience itself is at an end. An unique and ineffable experience totally different from any kind of intellectual cognition, and given under conditions which definitely exclude any kind of intellectual cognition, is averred to be the self-experience of the all-pervading One.

This experience stands perfectly secure from all intellectual criticism. Intellectual criticism may legitimately apply itself to the intellectual interpretations of this experience; but with the experience itself it can make no contact.

It is clear that the conviction of an all-pervading Unity given in mystical experience is absolutely opposed to any form of religious or philosophical dualism. A real Unity cannot be half-hearted. Mind and matter, good and evil, may seem different enough in our practical lives, but the differences cannot be ultimate. They are